



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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SIGNIFICANT JUMP IN NUMBER OF DEAD BIRDS

County Officials Urge Residents to Protect Themselves from West Nile Virus

County Vector Control officials announced today that 19 more dead birds have tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV), bringing the season-high total to 93 infected birds. Most of the dead birds were found in North and East County.

"We know that West Nile virus is more prevalent in the County now than it's ever been before," said Gary Erbeck, director of the County Department of Environmental Health. "Last year, we had a season total of 34 birds test positive for the virus. This year, we've already had a record 93 infected birds and the number continues to climb every week. It's more important than ever that County residents take precautionary measures to avoid getting mosquito bites and acquiring the virus."

Precautionary measures include wearing insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus; wearing long sleeves and long pants when outside, especially at dawn and dusk; ensuring windows and screens are well-maintained to keep mosquitoes from entering the home; and eliminating standing water around your property to avoid mosquito-breeding areas.

"Residents are encouraged to check their property weekly for standing water," said Erbeck. "It should be a priority this week because of the recent thunderstorms that rolled through the County."

Larger water sources, such as horse troughs, decorative fountains and inoperable swimming pools, can be stocked with free mosquito-eating fish that are available at 14 locations around the county.

To report dead birds, or to get information about mosquito fish and West Nile virus, visit the County's Web site at www.SDFightTheBite.com or call 1-888-551-INFO (4636).

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